belonged to various natural history bodies over the past fifty years—the British Ornithologists' Union since 1953; the Linnean Society since 1955; and the Royal Entomological Society since 1981. He is currently on committees of the Linnean and Royal Entomological Societies. He joined the British Entomological Society in 1975 and regards his election to its presidency as a great but undeserved honour.

SHORT COMMUNICATIONS

More observations of insect families active during low temperature.—I was interested to read the Short Communication by Patrick Roper on insects active during a period of continuous frost in East Sussex in the December 2001 issue. As a researcher investigating the diet of bats that are active during the winter months, I regularly carried out suction trapping and sweep netting for insects in an area where bats fed. I too was surprised at the presence of active insects at low temperatures.

The study was in a valley in south-east Cornwall and so continuous periods of frost were absent. However, temperatures were regularly below 10 °C. The table below lists the main families that were present and the total number of all insects caught along with the temperature.

It has been seen that insects that are particularly prevalent at low temperatures are Psychodidae and Cecidomyiidae with Trichoceridae and Chironomidae also present in some numbers. It is, however, again the Psychodidae and Cecidomyiidae that prevail at the lower temperatures and in mid-winter.

Although my collection was in a different county and at night, my findings are not dissimilar from those of Patrick Roper, with several of the main families present in both

	January	February	February	February	March	March
Psychodidae		8	13	33	71	5
Ceeidomyiidae				2		
Trichoceridae		2	1	34		5
Tipulidae			3	2	2	
Mycetophilidae			4	6		1
Chironomidae			7	18		1
Ceratopogonidae		2	2	5	1	
Sphaeroceridae				1		1
Ephydridae						2
Total insects	1	17	30	110	79	15
Temperature	*0.5*	*5*	*6.5*	*9.5*	*7.5*	*8.9*

	April	May	November	December	December	Deeember
Psychodidae		671	87		30	31
Cecidomyiidae		14	33		3	1
Trichoceridae		2	2			
Tipulidae	2	18	8			
Mycetophilidae	1					1
Chironomidae			1			2
Ceratopogonidae		10	1			3
Sphaeroceridae	1					
Ephydridae			1			
Total insects	31	755	143	2	33	42
Temperature	*9*	*9.7*	*6.5*	*0.5*	*7*	*10*

studies. Certainly my results agree that it is the tiny, delicate insects that were most in evidence. The only major differences between the findings of our respective studies appears to be the absence of Psychodidae from Mr Roper's survey, which intrigues me.

On the point raised by Mr Roper regarding the importance of these hardy insects for insectivorous birds and spiders, I would comment that bats can also be added to that list. Bats feed in the winter with the likelihood of this occurring being greater in some species of bat than in others. It is certainly true that the likelihood of bats feeding in winter is also related to temperature. In the milder parts of the UK, such as Cornwall, feeding by lesser horseshoe bats *Rhinolophus hipposideros* (Bechstein) is very frequent. Although winter temperatures above 10 °C support an abundance of active insects that make foraging by bats worthwhile, lesser horseshoe bats in Cornwall are known to feed at temperatures as low as 5 °C.

Trichoceridae, Tipulidae and Mycetophilidae are all important prey families in the winter diet of the lesser horseshoe bat in Cornwall, with Chironomidae and Psychodidae present at lower levels.

I feel it is true to say that these hardy winter-active insects are undoubtedly of great importance for those winter-feeding insectivores as well as proving interesting in their own right.—CAROL WILLIAMS, 10 Treveryn Parc, Budock Water, Falmouth TR11 5EH

Significance of the continued existence of a population of *Euura amerinae* (L.) (Hymenoptera: Tenthredinidae) after 25 years for the identification of factors determining hostplant acceptability

Abstract. An infestation by *Euura amerinae* on *Salix pentandra* was observed to continue over a period of 25 years. It is suggested that ontogenetic ageing of the host probably does not influence the development of populations of this sawfly as much as some previous studies have indicated. The variable reaction of the host to attack, depending probably mainly on site conditions and their effect on growth, greatly affects the availability of oviposition sites for the next generation of sawflies.

Roininen, Price & Tahvanainen (1993) studied the colonisation of a population of the shoot-galling sawfly *Euura amerinae* (L.) (Hymenoptera: Tenthredinidae) on young *Salix pentandra* L. (Bay Willow) growing from seed in eastern Finland. They reached the conclusion that the complete extinction of the sawfly at this site, just seven years after its first appearance, was probably mainly the result of ontogenetic ageing of the hostplants.

In 1976 (Liston, 1982) I found an isolated occurrence of *S. pentandra* at Beecraigs Country Park, Bathgate Hills, West Lothian, Scotland, with a very strong infestation by *E. amerinae*. During the first four years of observation, infestation remained exceedingly heavy, with several hundred fresh galls each year. It was noted in 1976 that the plants originated as a type of coppice growth: three "bushes" had grown from a stem of approximately 25 cm breast-height diameter lying on the ground. In August 2001 the site was revisited and the plants observed to still support a population of the sawfly. Around seventy fresh galls were present on the upper, leading shoots of the willows, which are now approx. 5 m in height (1.75 m when first found). The site conditions, in a wet flush on a former clearfell area, seem to be quite favourable for *pentandra*.

That *E. amerinae* is still present after 25 years contrasts markedly with the observations of Roininen *et al.* (l.c.), and suggests that ontogenetic ageing may not